FOREIGN ARCHITECTURAL AND ARTISTICAL INTELLIGENCE.

The Stones of Venice in 1851.—It is a melancholy fact to consider, that most of the Venetian Palaces, erected and adorned during the flourishing periods of this Italian republic, have got into the hands of strangers and foreigners, who will have very little interest in preserving their historical records and memorials. The Palace Pesaro, one of the finest on the *Canal Grande*, belongs now to the Austrian General Lienberg, who restores it Vienna-fashion. The Palace Vendramin Calergi has been acquired by the Duchess de Berri; that of Cavalli belongs to the Duc de Shambord; and the Palace Rezzonico to Don Carlos of Spain. The Palace Grassi has been purchased by Emperor Ferdinand of Austria; that of Foscari converted into military barracks. Madame Taglioni, as we have already mentioned, is said to have acquired half a dozen of old Venetian patrician palaces on the *Canal Grande*, amongst them the famous one called Ca' d' oro. [Sic transit . . .]

Reform of the Berlin Academy of Arts.—Considering that many young persons devote themselves to the study and practice of art, for which they have neither vocation nor talent, and which leads them to a life of continuous struggle and even distress—the academy has enacted regulations by which the capabilities of students are tested at an early stage. At the same time a certain legitimate sternness and consequentiality has been impressed on the management of the study in the Academy, by order of the superior board of management, amongst whom are Cornelius, Schadow, Begas, &c.

Hanoverian Archæology.—M. Mitthoff, inspector of architecture to the court of Hanover, has been engaged for several years past in studying and drawing the older architectural and other art monuments of the Nether-Elbe, which, dating from the eleventh century downwards, have hitherto been but little known. M. Mitthoff has now published the result of his researches under the title "*Archive for Nither Saxon Art-History*," accompanied by several plates in folio, containing designs made after nature and to measure. For obtaining a large circulation for the Archive, each province will form a separate work, so as to be accessible to persons interested in single localities. The first part contains the ancient monuments of Hanover, of which we mention the following plates: elevation of the market-church and town-hall; plan, perspective interior view and profiles and details of the former chief altar of the market-church (*Markt-Kirche*); memorial stone of the Aigidia Church; plan, perspective view of the choir and font of the same; three mediæval private houses, elevation, and detail of interior: friezes of the year 1499; parts of mediæval so-called partition houses (*Fachwerks-gebäude*); elevation of the apothecary wing of the town-hall building: descriptions and plates of mediæval costumes and armoury of the Nether-Elbe lands are also added to M. Mitthoff's work.

RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

The Vale of Neath Railway was opened on Tuesday week, from Neath to Aberdeen, a length of nineteen miles. From the Neath station, after crossing by bridges of wood, the Neath canal and river, the line passes in a northerly direction, by Aberdulais, Resolven, and Glynneath, about nine miles from Neath. The station there is the point of debarkation for the Pont-nedd Vaughan waterfalls, Dinas Rock, and other objects of interest. Immediately after leaving the Glynneath station, the railway ascends the Pontwalby Hill to Hirwaun Common, or the table-land at the top. From this point, for about two miles and a half, the line is a sort of steep cut in the hillside; and where necessary, the earth taken out is formed into embankments. The principal works on this portion of the line are the viaduct over the Gerrelech brook; the Skew bridge, beyond Pontwalby; and the viaduct over the dingle of Ynis-onws. The Skew bridge is inclined to the line some fifty or sixty degrees. It has a brick arch with a stone top. The viaduct at Ynis-onws consists of four bays, each of about 43 feet span, and is about 60 feet high. The line afterwards enters the Pencaedrain tunnel, and passes on to Hirwaun Common. Here are the extensive ironworks belonging to Mr. Crawshay. About a mile beyond Hirwaun, at "Geley Tara," the Vale of Neath divides into two branches, the main line conducting the traveller to Merthyr, through the Merthyr tunnel, which will be about one and three-quarters of a mile in length. This work, with other portions of the line to Merthyr, is now in process of construction. When the main trunk to Merthyr is completed, the whole length of the line will be twenty-two miles. It is a double line, and is laid on the seven-feet gauge. Intermediate between Neath and Aberdare it has five stations—Aberdulais, Resolven, Glynneath, Hirwaun, and Merthyr-road. The principal gradients on the line are, that opposite to Blaengrach, 1 in 100; that near Rheola, 1 in 300; and that at Pontwalby, 1 in 50, the greatest gradient on the line, we understand.—On Friday week the South Wales line was further opened from Chepstow to Gloucester, a distance of 27 miles. A connection with the Great Western is formed at Gloucester, but at Chepstow the communication is not yet completed, owing to the bridge over the Wye not being yet constructed. This causes a delay of twenty minutes, but the saving of time by the opening of the line so far amounts, nevertheless, to two hours and a half; and the journey from Paddington to Swansea by railway can now be done by express train in six hours forty minutes, distance about 210 miles. The line runs almost all the way close to the river up to Chepstow. An excursion train was to leave London on 28th ult. for "Chepstow Castle, Tintern Abbey, and the magnificent scenery of the Wye," to return on Monday; the fares being 12s. and 8s. there and back!—The viaducts of the Oxford, Worcester, and Wolverhampton Railway, at Coalbourn, near Stourbridge, and at Blakedown, near Kidderminster, are nearly completed: that at Hoo Brook is about being commenced: and those over the river Avon at Fladbury, Hampton, and Aldington, are in hand. The greater part of the permanent way from Worcester to Stoke Prior is laid. In the Micklelon tunnel the company are carrying on the works themselves by sub-contractors.—The Directors of the York, Newcastle, and Berwick line are said to have entered into contracts for the erection of extensive workshops adjoining the old station at Gateshead. The company are to concentrate their several works at Gateshead. Mr. R. Cail is the contractor for the masonry; Messrs. Hawks, Crawshay, and Sons, for the iron roof; and Messrs. R. Stephenson and Co. for the machinery.—The aggregate amount of traffic on railways in the United Kingdom, published weekly from the 1st of January to the 13th September inclusive, amounted to 10,313,333*l.*; corresponding period of 1850, to 8,968,236*l.*; of 1849, to 7,814,169*l.*; and of 1848, to 7,046,662*l.* The gross receipts for the eight railways having termini in the metropolis amounted to 167,795*l.* for the week ending 13th September, and for corresponding week of last year to 131,095*l.*, showing an increase of 36,703*l.* The increase on the Eastern Counties amounted to 1,358*l.*, on the Great Western to 6,601*l.*, on the Great Northern to 5,257*l.*, on the London, Brighton, and South Coast to 2,333*l.*, on the London and Blackwall to 410*l.*, on the North Western to 11,944*l.*, on the South Western to 4,975*l.*, and on the South Eastern to 3,625*l.*, making the total increase as above 36,703*l.*, being 73.7 per cent. of the total increase of traffic on railways in the United Kingdom, leaving an increase of 26.3 per cent. for the other lines; the aggregate receipts on which amount to about the same as on the metropolitan lines. In the week before last the returns exhibit the following results:—337,253*l.* were received on 6,456 miles of railway; for the corresponding period of 1850, on 6,151 miles, 287,468*l.* were received, showing an increase of 305 miles, or 4.96 per cent., and in the amount received of 49,765*l.*, or 17.31 per cent. The total amount received since 1st July was 3,724,891*l.*; for corresponding period of 1850, 3,143,537*l.*; showing a total increase in 11 weeks of 581,034*l.*—A self-acting firealarum and railway whistle, invented by Mr. D. Lloyd Price, of Brecon, watchmaker, has lately been added to the Exhibition. The novelty of this invention consists of a sensitive expanding compound metallic segment, which may be adjusted to suit any temperature by means of a small screw. At Somerset House it was tested by being placed in a room containing about 2,000 cubic feet of air. The machine being adjusted a few degrees above the temperature in the room, a sheet of paper was ignited, and was found sufficient to raise the temperature so as to set the alarum in motion. The mechanism consists simply of a pulley and weight, and a small lever detached by a helix, the whole enclosed in a case about 15 by 18 inches, including the small permanent voltaic battery. Once fixed, the inventor states that it would not require to be touched for years, and would always remain, like a sentinel, ready charged, giving instantaneous notice of the approach of the enemy.—A letter from Vienna says, a new invention has come into use on the Northern Railway, by which the guard can cause the engine to be stopped at any moment. It consists of a wire or cord attached to the guard's box, and running along the tops of the carriages, and communicating with the steam whistle. By pulling this cord, the guard has it always in his power to produce a sound that will call the engineer's attention.—The trial of the locomotives on the Mont Semmering has terminated. The prize of 20,000 ducats (1,000*l.*) has been awarded to the "Bavaria," a locomotive constructed by M. Maffei, of Munich. In informing M. Maffei of the granting of the prize, the Austrian government, in accordance with the conditions laid down, gave him an order for twenty other locomotives of the same kind.—The *Carlisle Journal* of Saturday week has an interesting article on the introduction of the railway system into Spain. "It is proposed to form a railway from the seaport of Santander, on the north coast of Spain, to Alcudel Rey, a distance of 85 miles; thence to Valladolid, a further distance of 75 miles; and ultimately to Madrid; the entire distance being 340 miles. This will constitute the most direct route of communication from London to Madrid. The journey between the two capitals now occupies a fortnight. As soon as the intermediate terminus at Valladolid has been attained, which will be in the course of four years, the distance will be accomplished with comfort in four days, and eventually, when the entire chain of railways shall have been completed, in three. This is no idle surmise. The work will be done. Already the contracts for the two first portions between Santander and Alcudel Rey, and between the latter place and Valladolid, have been let, and the works are to be proceeded with immediately." The contractor is Mr. George Mould, of Coldale Hall, near Carlisle. The line will cross the Pyrennees at a height of 2,500 feet above the level of the sea. The gauge will be that of England, namely, 4 feet 8½ inches, which it has been determined by the Cortes shall be the national gauge of Spain. Mr. Mould, it is said, has contracted to finish the line in all respects,—furnishing engines, plant, and so forth, and putting the whole into the hands of the company, in complete working condition, in the year 1855. The government guarantees the company 6 per cent.

Competition, Bradford.—A new chapel and schools are about to be erected by the Independents at Lister-hills, on the Thornton road, Bradford. The chapel will accommodate, including the children, nearly 900 worshippers, while spacious schools will be attached. The style of the building will be of the Geometrical Decorated period. Several designs were submitted to the committee in competition, and, after examination, that of Messrs. Lockwood and Mawson was adopted.

The Architectural Association.—The opening conversazione of the ensuing session takes place this Friday evening (3rd

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